



VERIS RFP Project Site Visit and Interview Notes

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General Information

Topic: Election Night Reporting

Election night reporting (ENR)

The GRs explained that on Election Night, the polls close at 7 PM. The results reporting process starts after polls close, closer to 8 PM with the Officers of Election at the polling locations calling the GRs with their individual site election results.

These localities do not have tabulation software. They shared that purchasing a central count system is too expensive (\$12K) for small localities.

The Officers of Election at the polling sites take the thermal tapes off the individual voting machines and read results over the phone to the locality GR who enters the information into VERIS for election night reporting. The Officers of Election complete the SOR at their precinct and deliver the paperwork and envelopes to the GR either on the night of the election or the next day. These tapes degrade over time, so they need to write numbers on forms. (This is by preference)

ELECT provides the Statement of Results (SoR) form, but the GRs modify it to fit their needs. Some GRs' SoRs are detailed while others are more bare bones. See the SoR examples to view the specific fields. The SoR form is supplied to all localities in a template form by ELECT. All localities use their own variations of this form to capture results from their polling location. ELECT allows the localities to adapt the template as they like.

For the simplistic version, since there are other reports that cover similar information (e.g. Ballot Count Report), some GRs don't want to copy data from a pre-existing report (which may introduce errors) and they would like to reduce the amount of paperwork. For the more robust SoR version, the GRs are using a form and process at a level of detail that their Officers of Election prefer.

Note that some GRs have "Closers," who are a separate group of Officers of Elections that come in at the end of the day—who haven't been working since 5 AM at the polls—to just do the results reporting.

The SoRs (with voting system tapes attached for each precinct in the locality) are sent to the Clerk of Court after the Canvass of Results and a copy is left in the Office of the GR for public review.

Some localities have Central Absentee Precinct (CAP)

The required election night reporting to ELECT includes, among other items:



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- Number of provisional ballots
 - Number dispensed because of missing ID
 - Number that fall under “other”

Provisional ballots are only one aspect of election night reporting. All results must be entered in VERIS during the Canvass and then certified by the Electoral Boards.

VERIS won't prompt you if you forgot to enter a number of votes for a precinct or something else. The GRs therefore do not see that they missed something until their report is on the state's website with the missing information.

The GRs would like a warning that all precincts are not in yet for results before the report is finalized. It should say “7/10 precincts have reported” as an example.

VERIS allows GRs to enter results by precinct or by office for reports.

The GRs want to get rid of the noise in the reports section of VERIS. They want to see only what is applicable to their locality and the specific election being conducted.

They have the same problem with the pre-populated zeros in the VERIS Election Night reports (and other places in VERIS) that have been discussed by other localities. They have to enter zeros over the pre-populated zeros in their reports or else ELECT will call and say their report is incomplete.

On the plus side with regard to reporting, VERIS updates very quickly to the state website. They also like that VERIS allows for comments and they like the reporting overall.

Day-after report

There is election data entered by the GR during the Canvass that is submitted which by law must begin the day after the election. It's an onerous process. On the data screen, the GRs are required to report on provisional ballots. This is only for the provisional ballots, but the way the process is broken down in VERIS makes it very user-unfriendly.

For write-ins, there are no “confirmed” write-in candidates (i.e. write-in process that involves some sort of pre-registration). The electoral boards decide whether to accept the candidate name variations and whether to aggregate misspellings. Only if the candidate reaches the 5% threshold, does their name explicitly have to be reported on the abstract. If there are no write-ins that reach the 5% threshold, they only have to report valid and invalid write-in numbers.

Provisional voters who were missing IDs on the day of the election have until noon the Friday after the Tuesday Election Day to present their ID to have their ballot count.



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The GRs like that ELECT sets up the elections in VERIS, but they would like to be able to activate only the elections that they are conducting.

VERIS doesn't warn the localities when precinct reports are missing. There should be some indication of how many precincts there are and then how many need to be reported.

GRs would really like a way to manage and pay pollworkers. Some GRs maintain their own database.

GRs would also like to maintain equipment inventory in VERIS (inventory management) for chain-of-custody, security, and machine status/location.

Abstracts

VERIS handles abstracts very well. They really enjoy this functionality and do not want it to change.

Voter credit

GRs need to reconcile turnout vs the voter credit report.

This method of voter credit used by these GRs is from the Advocate system.

A USB drive is placed used in the electronic pollbook laptop on Election Day in each precinct to get the .pollbook file (a proprietary export from DemTech, the maker of the electronic pollbook called Advocate) The information in this file is used to upload voter credit for each precinct into VERIS. This is a manual process. The localities do not get the USB until the next day during the canvass. Before the .pollbook file can be uploaded to VERIS, it goes through PAM to turn it into the .CSV format needed by VERIS. PAM is part of DemTech's pollbook solution and is essentially polling place analytics as it produces reports on voters, check-in times, etc. It is good for post-election analysis (e.g. voter throughput) and planning (i.e. does the polling location need more workers), but not very useful during the election. PAM does not produce the state reports. VERIS produces those, but PAM is needed to bridge report information to VERIS.

Voter registration

DMV records

On some of the DMV hopper records, if they're printed, the applications show the applicant noted they are military, however, the on-screen VERIS forms do not have the checkbox selected. If the form is processed without (re)selecting military, the military status is removed.

According to the GRs, an application in the DMV Hopper may correspond with a denied or cancelled registration, but the GRs have to process it as new. This creates multiple ID numbers and does not give a



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full picture of the voter transactions, so they cannot always merge after processing. They would like this changed in a future system.

If a voter has an application in both the DMV OVR and Paper OVR and you process the one in the DMV hopper, the paper application should automatically disappear.

The GRs feel they are missing critical information on applications from the DMV online hopper (which goes back to the lack of required fields in the DMV and Citizen portals).

Removal of duplicates

In the DMV OVR Hopper, all records have to be processed even if the records are duplicates.

Citizen Portal

The Citizen Portal is linked to VERIS in some ways but not in others, which makes the voter registration process difficult and not as efficient as it could be.

Auto-scanned alphas

The GRs would like the ability to delete auto-scanned alphas in their localities.

Pending/search

There should be a space in VERIS for real notes regarding correspondence/interaction with or regarding that voter. Example: “Pending” – There should be a reason “pending” is typed in the comments section of a voter’s profile and all of the pertinent info for a voter should be on “their” page, without the GR having to click on different icons for information and comments. Any and all information about that voter should be easily accessible on one page. They would like a space for comments at the end of a voter page, in date order and to be able to scroll through them all.

Absentee

Removal of duplicates

In the Paper OAB Hopper, the records can easily be deleted. In both the DMV OAB Hopper and the DMV OVR Hopper, all records have to be processed even if the records are duplicates.

In relation to the absentee applications the GRs want VERIS not to populate the elections that the GRs are not working in at that time. For example, applications for March 2020 should not be able to be populated until after close of books of the applications for 2019.



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Petitions

Petition page length

Circulators can submit either 12-line or 21-line petition pages. If the petition is set up as a 12-line petition, there's no way to add a 21-line page. The 8 ½ x 11 page only has 12 lines. The 8 1/12 x 14 has 21. If you start with the 8 ½ x 11 you cannot add more lines. The work around now is to add 21 lines. GRs believe petition process could be faster if they are given the option to pull up a street or address as well as searching each name. Petitions in VERIS are cumbersome, time consuming, and need better "editability" by GRs.

Congressional district restrictions

When processing petitions that cross localities, if one GR notices a difference between the address on record and the address on the petition for a voter in another locality, the first GR calls the second GR to let them know they may need to send the voter a confirmation mailing. The GRs would like some way inside of VERIS to flag these issues for the GRs rather than handle a manual process.

Reports and correspondence

Letters in VERIS are not customizable and the GRs want that functionality. Currently the letters are in ALL CAPS and the GRs do not like that. Also if you need to go back and pull out a prior correspondence it will automatically show today's date instead of the date that the letter was sent.

Reports section should be revamped. It needs a real search bar and there are currently too many menus to navigate through. Also, If /when you had to "return" you could at least see what you've already run or reviewed, these selections should be a different color in their opinion.

Candidate filing

The entire process needs to be more user friendly. Having to "return" constantly is a waste of time. Most, if not all, items to be entered should be on a single page in VERIS. All of these fields should be required fields in order to move the candidate forward. If they are not all filled out then the candidate should not be entered, with the petition pages being the only exception.

Each candidate files should have a real notes section – and only one notes section – where interactions can be noted.



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Campaign finance

Campaign Finance should be a part of VERIS to track and to also give the GRs notice when reports are missing.

Security

Multi-factor authentication

Okta and 2FA causes issues sometimes.

Receiving codes through the landline causes issues. When people are on the line you have to put them on hold to authenticate with Okta.

The phone calls to manage the second factor are difficult, inefficient, and error prone.

Other security

Losing access to VERIS can sometimes take a day to get back. Management of passwords is difficult. There is no password manager.

System stability

VERIS is unstable and space limited; it is down a lot. The GRs get logged at random intervals and have to call support.

Overall system issues

Usability

Overall, VERIS is not user-friendly. Hovering over icons should give a description of what they are, but nothing happens in VERIS. In general, all pages have entirely too many steps to handle a task. The search bar should actually be a search bar for what the user needs in VERIS, not just the capability to search for a name.

Save and next

The GRs are always needing to switch screens, logging in and out of different sections of VERIS and would like the capability to do “save & next” without coming back to the home screen and wasting time and keystrokes. There is no “back” button or “undo” button, so they need to go back to the home screen and start over which is a big time waster.



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An example of this in Voter Registration is: when entering a new voter manually after approving their application, VERIS will automatically go back to the “voter add” screen. They would like it to stay on the newly entered voter screen so the GR can capture the voter id number without having to do a voter search.

Recreation of paper process

They feel that VERIS tries to recreate a paper process rather than streamline and improve. There are many superfluous keystrokes throughout and it does not save time.

Current election only

The dropdown lists VERIS should only reflect the current election underway. Currently all past and future elections are listed and this is confusing to the GRs.

Pollworker and inventory management

The GRs would like VERIS to incorporate pollworker management and equipment management (aka inventory management or asset tracking) capabilities into VERIS because now they do those things outside of VERIS manually on spreadsheets which adds extra steps and an extra system. VERIS was supposed to have pollworker management functionality. However, in spite of providing input to ELECT on requirements for that, this aspect of VERIS never came to fruition.

Forms Warehouse

The GRs would like this aspect of VERIS to be revamped. Currently it is very hard to locate a form. They would like to be able to search for key words in a form or the actual ELECT form numbers. It is completely unfriendly currently.

Also want to be able to go back where they were searching and not start over with opening the individual forms to see what’s in them again as this is a serious time waster.

Miscellaneous

Voter language

No matter what type of update the GRs are performing, when The GRs goes in to a voter record for any reason to make a change, VERIS makes the change, notes it, and also adds a line that says “Voter selected English” when the action is processed (even if the action has nothing to do with language). The



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original voter record may have made no choice of language, so the system is assigning the language rather than keeping the record value.

Scanning

The GRs would like to add a description to a document when it is scanned directly to a record. Currently this is only available when scanning a batch with “batch name.”

Dual primaries

They would like a combined view of a dual primary with the D and R information on one (split) screen. They are separate elections happening at the same time in the same locations, therefore the localities would like a combined view, to both see dual primary information at the same time and enter the needed information as much of it is duplicative and this would save time.

It would also be helpful if the reports could be combined when doing a dual primary, i.e. when running the issued ballot report you now need to run one for the D’s and then run one for the R’s.

Electronic pollbooks

The GRs said that other localities supposedly used the ELECT pollbook at least once. They do not know of anyone else who did, however. Other localities told us that the pollbook was never built out or accessible to them, but that it was supposed to interface with VERIS.

National Voter Registration Act

In the auto-loading of the NVRA, they are unable to edit later if it is incorrectly entered.